

## Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 08BEIRUT350, LEBANON: UNIIC COMMISSIONER VOWS TO LEAVE NO

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08BEIRUT350**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">08BEIRUT350</a>	2008-03-07 14:14	2011-08-30 01:44	<a href="#">SECRET</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Beirut</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16461>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16545>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16546>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16605>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16606>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16703>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16793>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16794>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16636>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16635>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17148>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17149>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17150>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17152>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17155>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17156>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17157>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17158>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17159>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17160>

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17161>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17163>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17164>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17165>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17166>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17167>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17169>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17170>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/17171>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16723>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16635>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16636>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16637>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16638>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16639>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16640>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16641>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16642>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16643>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16644>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/16645>

VZCZCXRO8705  
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV  
DE RUEHLB #0350/01 0671414

ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 071414Z MAR 08

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1237  
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN PRIORITY 1107  
RHMCSSU/FBI WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2030  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2293  
RHEHNCS/NS WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFSS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AB FL PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BEIRUT 000350

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/FO, NEA/ELA, PRM/FO, INL/FO, IO/FO, L/FO, AND  
PM/FO  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/GAVITO  
TREASURY FOR U/S LEVEY, DEPUTY SECRETARY KIMMITT  
JUSTICE FOR OIA DIRECTOR WARLOW  
DEPT PASS TO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/06/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [PREF](#) [MASS](#) [SY](#) [IS](#) [LE](#)  
SUBJECT: LEBANON: UNIIC COMMISSIONER VOWS TO LEAVE NO  
STONE UNTURNED -- BUT NEEDS U.S. ASSISTANCE

REF: BEIRUT 166

BEIRUT 00000350 001.2 OF 003

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Michele J. Sison for Reasons: Section 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

-----

[¶11.](#) (C) This is an action request. See paragraphs 13-14.

¶12. (C) UNIIIC Commissioner and Prosecutor-Designate Daniel Bellemare is as determined as ever to succeed in his mission, but warns that it will take more time and resources before he will be able to issue indictments. Bellemare, who is scheduled to present his next report to the UN Security Council on April 8, would like to travel to Washington April 9 to meet with senior-level USG officials to discuss USG assistance. End summary.

FOCUS, STAMINA, AND HELP FROM THE U.S.

---

¶13. (C) The Charge, accompanied by Pol/Econ Chief, paid an introductory call on UN International Independent Investigation Commission (UNIIIC) Commissioner and Prosecutor-Designate Daniel Bellemare and UNIIIC investigator Stacy de la Torre at UNIIIC headquarters on March 6. Bellemare reiterated his previous message that "failure was not an option," since it would send a bad message to terrorists in the region. To achieve success UNIIIC, however, needed to keep at it with focus, stamina, and the best possible resources, including help from the U.S.

¶14. (C) UNIIIC's workload of 21 cases (the 2005 Hariri assassination plus 20 others) was a "massive" investigation, he stressed. UNIIIC is looking at similar investigations, such as the FBI investigation into the attack on Khobar towers, to understand better how to conduct its business and enlist the cooperation of local authorities and in the international community.

PRIMARY NEED IS INVESTIGATIVE LEADS

---

¶15. (S) Stressing that time is of the essence, Bellemare reiterated his appeal for member states' assistance, both in terms of providing intelligence leads and TDY experts on the ground. As Commissioner, he needs investigative leads provided through what UNIIIC would consider "anonymous" tips that would allow him to develop admissible evidence that, once he dons his prosecutor hat, can be used to make indictments.

¶16. (S) The intelligence community can provide hints on where to look, or where not to look, he said, citing an ICTY example where, following a source's tip that a certain video existed, the ICTY eventually was able to find this important piece of evidence. For example, Bellemare said, UNIIIC has sketches of potential witnesses whom it will need to identify, but security reasons prevent it from mass distributing them. The U.S. could help by using its network of informants to help identify these people.

¶17. (C) I will "leave no stone unturned," Bellemare vowed, "but I need U.S. assistance. Casting the net to see what you catch is fine, but at some point you need to know what you are fishing for." Bellemare reiterated that the general "menu" of types of assistance needed was an attempt to make it easy for member states to say yes. In terms of personnel, Bellemare said the U.S. could help most by providing experienced investigators to conduct "normal police-style" interviews on the ground in Lebanon. He offered to travel to Washington on April 9 to meet with USG officials, adding that meetings with "high level contacts who can open doors" would be greatly appreciated.

FORTRESS UNIIIC

---

¶18. (C) UNIIIC operates out of the Monteverde Hotel in the hills outside of Beirut, which is now used exclusively for UNIIIC offices and accommodation for UNIIIC personnel. The "fortress" is protected by 500 military personnel in three perimeters of defense: UN security, Internal Security Forces (ISF), and Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). Bellemare himself leaves the compound only when necessary and surrounded with a 50-vehicle motorcade. Even his international travel is kept under tight wraps and involves the Royal Canadian Mounted

Police (when in Canada) and other security details.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS ON INDICTMENTS

---

¶9. (C) Stating that he was confident UNIIIC "will resolve this, but it won't be overnight," Bellemare stressed the need to manage expectations on when the Tribunal would be able to issue formal indictments. Repeating what he told us on January 31 (reftel), Bellemare said names of suspects will not be in his next report but will only appear in the indictments. UNIIIC needed to be pragmatic given the challenging security environment. However the report, his first, which he will present to the UN Security Council on April 8, will differ in style and approach and be more direct, he said, sending "clear signals in terms of expectations."

¶10. (C) The Charge asked about recent leaks that Hizballah was involved in at least some of the assassinations. Bellemare, who also had heard the rumors, said the information did not come from UNIIIC. (Note: UNIIIC sent us a January 26, 2008 Stratfor article claiming Hizballah carried out the January 25 bombing that killed ISF Captain Wissam Eid, as well as the January 15 attack against a U.S. Embassy vehicle. End note.

¶11. (C) Bellemare stressed that UNIIIC's investigation would not be finished on June 15 (when its mandate expires), but he did not know yet how and when UNIIIC would evolve into the Tribunal. The Secretary General must consider three things when deciding when to begin the Tribunal's operations: finances (i.e., has the UN received funding for the first three years?), the political circumstances, and the progress of the investigation. It was best to avoid a long period between the operational start-up and the first indictment, Bellemare said, to avoid having judges sitting there idly waiting.

¶12. (C) Bellemare further recalled that indictments in the ICTY and ICC took two years, and the Oklahoma bombing indictments did not happen overnight either, not to speak of the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks. "We are not miracle workers," Bellemare, so there should be "no illusions of immediacy." However, the fact that the Tribunal had been created despite the fact that the investigations were not complete sent a political message that there would be an end to impunity and that the process was irreversible. The question now was not if but when the Tribunal would get to the end results. "I don't believe in the perfect crime," he said, "It's just a matter of time."

ACTION REQUEST

---

¶13. (C) Bellemare would like to visit Washington on April 9, the day after he presents his report to the UN Security Council. Post requests Department schedule (at a minimum) meetings with NEA A/S Welch and IO A/S Silverberg. We also strongly recommend a meeting with the Secretary and/or Deputy Secretary, if available. Post requests Department also

SIPDIS

schedule meetings with the NSC, FBI, and DEA (investigators) at the highest levels appropriate/possible. It would also be useful for a member of Director Mueller's delegation to stop in Beirut to meet with UNIIIC on the margins of Director Mueller's upcoming visit to Amman.

¶14. (S) On assistance, we urge Washington agencies to be forward-leaning in meeting UNIIIC's requests, especially in terms of providing investigators to conduct interviews and intelligence-sharing. End action request.

SISON